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AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST

THE MONTAGNAIS
"HUNTING TERRITORY"
AND THE FUR TRADE

By
ELEANOR LEACOCK

AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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MAP I



Montagnais-Naskapi Bands of the Labrador Peninsula in the 1920's (Speck 1931)

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FOREWORD

The aboriginality of the northeastern Algonkian "family hunting territory" has been the subject of periodic debate throughout the three decades following Speck's first description of the system. The present work re-explores some dynamic and historical aspects of the problem among the Montagnais-Naskapi of the Labrador Peninsula in the light of new data from central and southeastern Labrador, where the hunting territory is at present either absent or in the process of developing. It offers as evidence for the post-Columbian development of the system a description and analysis of the main factors responsible for it in one area at least—eastern Labrador—plus the application of the resulting hypotheses to a re-evaluation of the historical material from western Labrador.

Field work was carried on during the summer of 1950 at Natashquan, which lies on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River about two-thirds of the distance from Quebec to the Strait of Belle Isle. The Natashquan band numbers about one hundred and fifteen. Many of the older men had joined the band as adults, so that it was possible to work with informants who had hunted throughout the whole central and southeastern area.

My principal informant and interpreter, Thomas Gregoire, a man of fifty-four at the time, was born and had grown to manhood in the St. Augustin band. Upon his first marriage, he joined the Romaine band and some fifteen years past had "come down Natashquan" with his mother, his wife having died. His mother, Alice Peter, was eighty-five when I worked with her. She furnished details of her life as a girl and young woman of the Northwest River band, as well as what she had heard from her father, an Abenaki, who had crossed over from Gaspesia and married into the Northwest River band.

Mathieu Medikabo, sixty-three, had grown up with the Romaine band and had moved to Natashquan when he was about forty. As a young man at Romaine, he had crossed over the Height of Land every Christmas to trade at the Northwest River post and hunt to the north and west of Hamilton Inlet in the spring.

Pierre Toby, a man approaching forty, was reared at Seven Islands.

His family was part of the then disintegrating Petitskapau band. As a boy, he had accompanied his father down to Fort Chimo one year, after wintering with the Ungava band. The Watts, a white couple, accompanied the Indians on their return to Seven Islands, and Mrs. Watt refers to "little Pierre" in her account of the trip. Pierre is a cousin of Pierre Gabriel, one of Tanner's informants, and a brother-in-law of the other, Mathieu Andre. Upon his marriage to Mathieu Andre's sister, Pierre joined what had been the Michikamau band, later changing his affiliation to Northwest River. He joined the Natashquan band in 1946.

The material used in the fourth chapter of this book on present-day Montagnais hunting and trapping patterns was gathered in the most specific terms. From Thomas and Mathieu I obtained genealogies and life-histories of all Natashquan band members and detailed histories of their own lives, particularly with regard to where and with whom they had hunted. They also helped me record the various partnerships of each band member and the places they had trapped for the last three years, as well as the general rules and regulations concerning hunting and trapping, which they filled out with specific illustrative examples. Speck's list of the adult male members of the Natashquan band in the 1920's, although somewhat cursorily compiled and not entirely correct, was a valuable aid in carrying the picture back a generation.¹

With Pierre Toby, I worked over the material in Speck and Eiseley's paper, "Montagnais-Naskapi Bands and Family Hunting Districts of the Central and Southeastern Labrador Peninsula,"² getting what he knew of the life-histories and hunting partnerships and grounds of the Indians mentioned therein. Speck's data were collected at about the time when Pierre had started participating in the hunt as an adolescent boy. I worked jointly with Pierre and Alice Peter to build up a picture of the Northwest River band along the same lines—the more valuable, since they had lived there almost a generation apart. This material was verified and amplified at Northwest River itself during the summer of 1951, although the problem of hunting territories was then no longer the major focus of my work.

As our work at Natashquan progressed, my informants became interested in the theoretical aspects of the varieties of hunting practices they had come into contact with or were hearing described. Their impromptu reactions were a valuable indication of their attitudes toward the alternatives they are faced with as family territories develop.

In all my work I depended largely upon maps, both general maps of large areas and detailed maps down to trap lines and tent locations. They were drawn for me by Mathieu Medikabo, whose skill and ability along these lines were extraordinary. With a little training, he would make an invaluable assistant to one of the geologists or prospectors now working to open up Labrador to mining. It will be a great loss both to the Indians and to the whites of Labrador if the knowledge and ability of Mathieu and many other Indians like him are allowed to go unused.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank my informants for the conscientiousness and patience with which they saw me through my work, as well as the whole Natashquan and Northwest River bands for the tolerance and friendliness with which they accepted me and my questions and cameras. I also wish to extend my gratitude to the Columbia University Anthropology Department and to the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research for making my field work possible.

I am indebted to William Duncan Strong, Julian Steward, and Charles Wagley, who read and criticized this work, as well as to J. Bartlet Brebner of the Columbia Graduate History Department. I should like to thank also the many people who gave me help and moral support while in the field, among them B. G. Clench, agent for the Indians along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River; Father Loiselle, missionary; Mme Francis Hounsell of Natashquan; Lucien Morisset of the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs; Gaston Moisan of the Fish and Game Department for the Province of Quebec; Mogens Bald of the Hudson's Bay Company at Blanc Sablon; Wilson Cave, factor of the Hudson's Bay store at Northwest River; Father McGee of the Anthropology Department at the Catholic University and serving temporarily as chaplain at the Goose Bay Air Base; and Mr. and Mrs. Philip Blake of Northwest River. I particularly want to extend my best wishes to Father Cyr of Davis Inlet and express my gratitude for his understanding of and warm concern for the welfare of the Labrador Indians.

E. L.

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I / INTRODUCTION

Frank G. Speck was responsible for the initial discovery and description of the hunting territory in western Labrador and among the neighboring Algonkian tribes to the south and farther west. The central fact that arrested his attention some thirty-five years ago was that Montagnais Indian hunters could indicate on a map not only their "own" hunting lands but also the lands of others—lands which they said had been received from their fathers and would be passed down for their sons' exclusive use. In 1926 he wrote:

We may define the family hunting group as a kinship group composed of individuals united by blood or marriage, maintaining the right to hunt, trap and fish in a certain inherited district bounded by some rivers, lakes or other natural landmarks. . . . With a few exceptions the whole territory claimed by each tribe was subdivided into tracts owned from time immemorial by the same families and handed down from generation to generation in the male line. The almost exact bounds of these territories were known and recognized, and trespass, which, indeed, was of rare occurrence, was summarily punishable.¹

This indeed added a new dimension to the knowledge of land-holding patterns among hunting peoples, although it may be finally agreed that its significance lies more properly in the sphere of acculturation than in that of primitive economics proper.

In any case, further field work has shown the hunting territory to be less clear cut than it first appeared to Speck. Lips's detailed study of law ways among the Mistassini and Lake St. John bands, plus other reports, including Speck's own later work, have modified the earlier picture. For instance, the laws of patrilineal inheritance do not supersede band interest.² The occurrence of widely separated brothers' lands and the lack of any really small holdings attest to the continual readjustment of band lands to fit the needs of band members.³ Each Indian has a right to trapping lands of his own, and at the request of the chief a band member must give up part of his ground, if necessary, for another's use.⁴ There is no material advantage to an individual hunter in claiming more territory than he can personally exploit. Nor is there any prestige attached to holding a sizable territory or any emphasis on building up and preserving the paternal inheritance.⁵ Neither can land be bought or sold. In other words, land

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has no value as "real estate" apart from its products. What is involved is more properly a form of usufruct than "true" ownership.⁶ This corresponds to what we know of other primitive groups in which ownership generally involves special features of the land rather than the territory per se.

My hypothesis is, first, that such private ownership of specific resources as exists has developed in response to the introduction of sale and exchange into Indian economy which accompanied the fur trade and, second, that it was these private rights—specifically to fur-bearing animals—which laid the basis for individually inherited rights to land. The first assumption is supported by the emphasis on rights to the beaver among the Montagnais as well as by the differential protection of individual property where immediate needs are involved as compared to acquisition for sale. For instance, trespass, or socially disapproved encroachment on another's territory, can occur in one case only—when hunting for meat or fur to sell.⁷ The concept of trespass as simple physical encroachment on another's land does not exist, nor do berrying, fishing, bark-gathering, or hunting game animals constitute trespass. These products of the land are communally owned in that they can be hunted or gathered anywhere.⁸ Since beaver fur is the principal item sold, the right to beaver represents "perhaps the most respected property right even in our sense of the term."⁹ However, a man finding himself in need of food on another's land may kill the beaver—even all the beavers in a lodge—although he cannot kill them to sell the fur.¹⁰ The same principle applies in the case of mercuric sulfide, the vermilion dye preferred before aniline dyes became procurable at the trading post. It was obtained from a certain location on a Mistassini Indian's lands. Any Indian from the Mistassini or another band could enter the territory and take what he needed without payment or permission, although it was agreed that he could not take an additional amount to sell.¹¹

Speck, and after him Eiseley, rejected the hypothesis that the hunting territory developed as a reaction to the fur trade. They felt that segregated hunting units possessing hereditary land rights were fundamental to Algonkian social organization and appeared early as a result of population pressure in a forest area supporting segregated nonmigratory game.

We view it as a response to conditions in a forest region not too productive in terms of large game, but having a small fauna (primarily beaver) which could be husbanded and manipulated rather successfully by individual families, whereas a large group might starve on the same territory.¹²

This hypothesis appears untenable for several reasons. First, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that small game was of sufficient importance prior to the fur trade to be the determining factor in socioeconomic institutions. The moose and woodland caribou are frequently mentioned in the early records, especially by Le Jeune, who wintered with a Montagnais band in the year 1633-34.¹³ Le Jeune's host said that, to eat well, his group of twenty persons needed two elks a day.¹⁴ As a matter of fact, they all but starved on beaver and porcupine during the first part of the winter and were not out of danger until they brought in a fair number of large game animals.¹⁵

Second, the theory depends largely on the aboriginality of conservation, which remains no more than a questionable inference. Not only is it not found in eastern Labrador, but its existence in the west in the early seventeenth century is explicitly denied by Le Jeune: "When the Savages find a lodge of them [beavers], they kill all, great and small, male and female. There is danger that they will finally exterminate the species in this Region, as has happened among the Hurons."¹⁶ Moreover, conservation implies a drive toward "settling down" that is markedly absent in this as in other simple cultures. The present-day life of the eastern Montagnais bands indicates that wandering in multifamily groups is so basic a pattern that they are adjusting with difficulty to the limited movement and smaller numbers which are demanded by the fur trade and which are necessary to a system of husbanding game in family territories. Whereas this may not constitute definitive proof that conservation in the west was not aboriginal, it certainly places the burden of the proof upon those who would make its aboriginality indispensable to their theory.

Third, the existence of real population pressure in an early period remains unverified. Unfortunately, an attempt to estimate the relative densities of the human inhabitants and the fauna in pre-Columbian Labrador would be hopeless; we do not even have these data for today. But Hallowell's analysis of hunting territories among the Grand Lake Victoria and the Berens River Indians in Manitoba indicates no population pressure in this area at present, in that hunting territories have not even been extended to their possible limits.¹⁷ If population pressure has not been felt recently after the invasion of white trappers and the adoption of their intensive trapping methods by the Indians, it is doubtful if it was felt centuries before Columbus. Although it is generally assumed that the population was then somewhat greater, there is no

indication that it was ever significantly so. On the other hand, we do know that there was relative pressure in the period after the arrival of the whites, when the Montagnais began moving into much of the southeastern Labrador area under pressure from the Iroquois and western Algonkians, and in turn bringing pressure to bear upon the Eskimo. These conditions presumably not only should have prevented the loss of a system related to population pressure but, on the contrary, might well have strengthened it, whereas the fact of the matter is that hunting territories become more fluid to the east and disappear completely beyond Seven Islands.

Lastly, although Speck was aware that the hunting territory fades out among the southeastern bands, he failed to take into account the significance of this distribution. He and Eiseley explain the communal nomadism of the Naskapi in northern Labrador on the basis of their dependence upon migratory caribou, in contrast to the Montagnais adaptation to the more sedentary fauna of the woodland area below the Height of Land.

There are two types of social development at work among the northern Algonkian, associated evidently with their occupation of one or the other geographical zone types. . . . Of the two types one is nomadic and communal in structure as regards the grouping of biological family units to form a collective band. It occupies the open tundra north of the forest zone where the Barren Ground caribou is an economic mainstay. The second type is based upon the more sedentary limited nomadic family principle and seems to remain confined to the coniferous forest area. The factor operating chiefly to determine the two is, we believe, traceable in large degree to the natural history of the game animals which alone furnish the natives of the Labradorean area with their subsistence.¹⁸

And later:

The frontier dividing the tundra from the forest, to be concise, is the factor determining the character of animal life and the social-economic life of the Indians within and without these respective zones.¹⁹

However, while it seems logical enough on the face of it that dependence upon migratory caribou would inevitably lead to significantly greater nomadism than dependence upon more sedentary game, the case has perhaps been exaggerated. On the one hand, we have the experiences of the early Jesuits who worked with the Montagnais below the Height of Land and found far greater nomadism in this area than exists today, a point to be discussed below. On the other, there is the fact that the Naskapi do not simply follow the caribou willy-nilly. At the beginning of this century Mrs. Hubbard informed a camp of Barren Ground people at

Indian House Lake that she had seen caribou near Michikamau. The Indians responded that it was not their country and wondered whether the caribou would come near them.²⁰ Of course, such traditional limits to their band territory would break down in the face of starvation, but the important fact is that traditional limits did exist.²¹ Turner's report of the Barren Ground Naskapi even mentions the same kind of seasonal allocation of hunting lands to different groups within the band that is often taken as evidence of "family territories" when appearing in early accounts of the Montagnais. He recounts how, about the middle of July, the men who have come down to Fort Chimo

select the locality where they will remain for the summer and fall. . . . Each head of a party announces his intended location and the parties gradually leave the post for their destination. . . . The various parties disperse in different locations in order that the entire district may afford its products for their benefit. The Indians know the habits of the animals in these regions so well that they are sure, if they go to a particular locality, to find the game they are in quest of.²²

Recent cases where family territories have been pre-empted even out on the tundra serve as striking examples in support of the hypothesis that the basis of the native economy (i.e., whether hunting game animals or trapping fur-bearing animals as the primary activity) is more fundamental to socioeconomic patterns in this area than the forest-tundra division. Cooper mentions that among the Attawapiskat-Opinage Cree "spots here and there . . . have in recent times been pre-empted by two or three families who have chosen to take up permanent abode on the tundra,"²³ presumably, he feels, to trap arctic foxes. Speck notes the same thing among the inland Eskimo bands of eastern Labrador. The pattern of the inland hunt has "changed somewhat in the last few years through the influence of the traders,"²⁴ he writes, mentioning the present existence of "territorial rights inherited in the family."²⁵ Apparently the family groups, when they leave the coast for the interior, now "pre-empt a section of country which they trap over, fish for trout and salmon, and dwell in without interference by others."²⁶

The aforementioned fact that the hunting territory is not common to all the Montagnais living in the forest area below the Height of Land must also be taken into account. Speck wrote in an early paper:

And again a correction may be made in the prevailing opinion . . . that the Height of Land . . . is a boundary dividing the so-called Montagnais on the southern side from the so-called Naskapi of the north. It turns out, indeed, that the inhabitants of the southern

coasts, from about Seven Islands eastward, are, in both speech and habit, almost identical with the interior groups recognized as true Naskapi, and hence deserve inclusion with them.²⁷

The inescapable fact is that the strength of individualized land-holding patterns characteristic of the western Montagnais decreases not only northward toward the tundra, where the Naskapi used to depend almost entirely upon the migratory caribou, but also outward from the center of the earliest and most intensive fur trade.

Tanner, however, offers the suggestion that the fur trade has been responsible for breaking down formerly existing family territories in eastern Labrador. He points out that the fur trade brought with it "a new historical phase for the free sons of the wilderness" in which "their economic freedom gradually disappeared."²⁸

At first it seems perhaps improbable that a trading company should be able to control and direct the lives of the Indians in the limitless wilds; yet we have already seen the same phenomena in the east of the peninsula in more recent times; the Hudson's Bay Company directing the Naskaupsee now to the north, now to the south as they considered best. . . . This policy has come to mean that the exploitation of the hunting-grounds is in many respects regulated by the fur trader. . . . With some exaggeration it may be said that the Indian hunter is becoming only a kind of intelligent hunting-dog for the trader, kept alive to bring him skins.²⁹

Tanner feels that this control by the trader, plus the invasion of white trappers and the depletion of game, explain the lack of a hunting-territory system in southeastern Labrador and on the interior Lake Plateau.

Tanner's hypothesis that "there was once a somewhat higher kind of social organization among the Montagnais of the Lake Plateau even as now among those of the southwest"³⁰ seemed confirmed by the explicit claims to hereditary territories on the part of two informants, Mathieu Andre and Pierre Gabriel. However, my study of the land-holding practices of the Seven Islands and Natashquan bands demonstrated precisely the reverse. Such territories mark the beginning of private hunting grounds (or, more properly, trapping grounds), now developing as a result of the recent dependence on the fur trade and reinforced by the example of the western Montagnais and the permanent trap lines of the whites. In this area the emphasis on acquiring furs for exchange has but recently superseded the emphasis on obtaining food for consumption, with the apparent result that individualized hunting patterns moving toward private "ownership" of land are only beginning to replace co-operative patterns and communal ownership. Formerly the main quest was for

food, and band boundaries were vague, amounting to little more than a tacit agreement to keep the bands distributed more or less evenly over a given area. Trespass was not so much a question of legality as of sheer impracticality. In cases of need, a band felt no hesitation about moving in on another for help. However, with greater attention paid to amassing furs for exchange, there has been more specific delineation of band boundaries, which in central Labrador is reaching its ultimate conclusion in the delineation of individual territories similar to those cited by Tanner.

The basic dynamic of this process can perhaps best be seen by elaborating upon Herskovits' statement that it is the production for use rather than for exchange in primitive economies that focuses the attention on the products of the land rather than the land itself.³¹ Formerly the Montagnais hunted co-operatively and shared their game, which was immediately consumed by the group. They could not preserve, store, or transport food to any significant extent. Occasionally there was surplus meat to be dried and kept, but it merely filled in temporarily when hunting was poor and could not be depended upon for any length of time. Owing to the uncertainty of the hunt, several families were necessarily dependent upon each other, thus providing "a kind of subsistence insurance or greater security than individual families could achieve."³² With production for trade, however, the individual's most important ties, economically speaking, were transferred from within the band to without, and his objective relation to other band members changed from the co-operative to the competitive. With storable, transportable, and individually acquired supplies—principally flour and lard—as staple foods, the individual family becomes self-sufficient, and larger group living is not only superfluous in the struggle for existence but a positive hindrance to the personal acquisition of furs. The more furs one collects, the more material comforts one can obtain. In contrast to the aboriginal situation, material needs become theoretically limitless. The family group begins to resent intrusions that threaten to limit its take of furs and develops a sense of proprietorship over a certain area, to which it returns year after year for the sake of greater efficiency.

Speck and Eiseley themselves give an excellent example of a case where the increasing importance of the fur trade has but recently caused a shift from communal to segregated hunting and trapping patterns as dominant. Speck observed the process taking place in the Michikamau

band of the Lake Plateau, and he and Eiseley write:

Assuming that the food quest is an inevitable aboriginal occupation and that fur trapping has been accentuated since contact with Europeans, a chronological sequence may be postulated in the case before us. . . . The trapping activity . . . practically necessitates the separate family distribution of population over a wider area, and intensively in spots where fur bearing animals abound. The magnitude of the recent change in the economic set-up of the Michikamau Indians is manifest in the fact that they now engage in the more arduous and consuming annual voyage from their hunting ground to the Seven Island post than the trek to Northwest River as formerly. This procedure is in the endeavor to gain the advantages of better trade at greater expense of time and effort. Trade has become a moving impulse in their life calling. We may accordingly postulate the direction of change in the case of this band by placing the communal caribou hunting activity before the era of trapping in split-up family groups.³³

However, the authors go on to state explicitly that

to apply the same gauge to every band in the Montagnais-Naskapi complex to prove the postulate [that family hunting territories are a response to the fur trade] would be to cheapen the methods of research by shape-shifting to a degree beyond the bounds of patience. To propose an explanation for economic change over a wide area of the north by assuming that the history of any one band is a recapitulation of the whole would be unjustified.³⁴

On the other hand, to rule out so casually the possibility that the same gauge may apply to other bands is also to "cheapen the methods of research," particularly when the socioeconomic changes which occurred in the Michikamau band are evidenced throughout the whole Labrador area. Indeed, the scientist is compelled to inquire into the nature of the similarity and to investigate the extent to which the factors operating in one band operate in similar and contiguous bands.

There are many contributing factors of greater or lesser importance which must have affected the relative ease and speed with which the hunting territory developed, such as the replacement of wooden traps and deadfalls by far more efficient steel traps³⁵ and the possibility of picking up temporary jobs and becoming familiarized with cash economy. Bailey, who has gathered together the early material on eastern Algonkian acculturation, mentions the increasing scarcity of game as a factor.³⁶ This scarcity was caused, presumably, by the intensive killing of fur-bearing animals which was necessitated by the new dependence upon European materials and made possible by the introduction of firearms. It forced the bands "to split into families, since the diminished food supply in any one area was not sufficient for the subsistence of a large band."³⁷

Added to this, the French were always desirous of dealing with individuals rather than with groups, the members of which were not thought by them to be responsible for each other's actions. Moreover, the actual pelts were owned by individuals. Thus personal ownership might by easy transference have been extended to the hunting lands. Added to this, the change from band to family ownership was partly due to the influence of white trappers who married native women and occupied trapping areas without consulting the bands.³⁸

Jenness gives as additional factors colonization, the establishment of trading posts, and the increasing importance of small fur-bearing game which could be, and now had to be, husbanded—all of which placed new limitations on freedom of movement.³⁹ Steward speaks of the "intimate functional relationship" between "the unusual feature of family land ownership" and the "highly specialized economy introduced by the fur trade."

Fur-bearing animals, especially the beaver, may be husbanded in relatively small areas. Barter of pelts with the white man for other goods enables a group to subsist on an area which is smaller than would otherwise be possible.⁴⁰

This is not to say that individual land-holding patterns develop smoothly and easily as soon as the fur trade becomes the economic basis of Indian life. On the contrary, the Indians show considerable resistance to giving up communal for individualized patterns of living. My informants at Natashquan were to some extent aware of their dilemma, presented as they are with the conflict between their desire to increase their incomes and acquire the material comforts they see available and their resistance to changing basic patterns of everyday existence. Their socioeconomic institutions are intermediate between those of the more communal Naskapi to the north and the more individualized western Montagnais, as evidenced by their obvious compromise between communal and individualized rules for sharing game, their differential attitude toward co-operation where money is involved as compared to activities in which aboriginal methods of production still obtain, and, most markedly, their recent attempts to trap more efficiently by leaving their families at the coast during the winter season. The conflicts these compromises involve throw light on the resistance to full-time trapping which is otherwise somewhat puzzling in its consistent reappearance in the historical accounts of western Labrador—a resistance hard to explain if the Indians already had the segregated family hunting territory so admirably suited to dependence on fur-trading.

II / THE HISTORICAL DIMENSION

Before turning to a more detailed discussion of the dynamics behind the development of the hunting territory, it is necessary to consider the relation of the time dimension to the subject. Cooper's argument for the aboriginality of the family hunting territory is that early records indicate its existence in western Labrador in the seventeenth century before the fur trade was sufficiently developed to affect native socioeconomic institutions.¹ However, his evaluation of the evidence supporting the early existence of the family territory is not altogether convincing. For instance, he relies on a statement made in 1761 to prove the existence of the hunting territory in the Upper St. Lawrence as far back as the second half of the preceding century,² in spite of the fact that the functional picture of Indian life which can be pieced together from seventeenth-century accounts is simply not compatible with family territory organization. More likely it was during the seventeenth century that socioeconomic patterns in western Labrador were being adjusted to meet the demands of fur-trapping. In this case it is perfectly reasonable to assume that they would have crystallized by the middle of the eighteenth century or even before.

Speck and Eiseley take the more moderate view that definite evidence of the family hunting territory carries it back to the early eighteenth century.³ However, they rule out its possible relation to the fur trade by assuming, as does Cooper, that the trade was of no real significance until the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670.⁴ This overemphasis on the Hudson's Bay Company at the expense of the earlier French companies obscures the fact that the fur trade became important to the French during the sixteenth century and flourished throughout the seventeenth century alongside the growing trade of the British. The first trading was carried on as a secondary source of income by fishermen in the early 1500's,⁵ but by the middle of the century it had reached such proportions that there were ships specializing in trade alone.⁶ The first monopoly of the trade was attempted in 1588. Its failure shows, according to Biggar, that trade "had already assumed very considerable proportions and that the number of those who had felt their interests threatened was by no means small."⁷ In the first years

of the seventeenth century two short-lived monopolies were unable to enforce their exclusive right over the trade.⁸ By 1610 the number of trading vessels had increased to the extent that some of them were unable to get rid of their merchandise.⁹ The average harvest of beaver skins was from 15,000 to 20,000 in the first years of the seventeenth century, with a high of 22,000.¹⁰ The figure had risen to 80,000 by the 1670's.¹¹

There is no doubt that this trade was of considerable significance in the development of French economy. Its importance could probably be assessed with some degree of accuracy, for there are relatively extensive collections of the early records, accounts, and correspondence connected with it. However, material on the number of Montagnais engaged in the trade, the ease with which beavers were obtained, and the return in terms of their own economy that the Indians received for their furs is, as might be expected, infrequent and, when given, all too casual and indefinite. Unfortunately, a quantitative estimation of the importance of the trade to Montagnais economy, if possible at all, would have to be such a rough approximation as to be useless.

It can be said, however, that partial and indirect evidence does indicate that the trade must have been of far more than minor importance, at least to those bands nearest to Quebec and Tadoussac. At the turn of the seventeenth century they were already acting as middlemen in the trade with bands farther north.¹² While it is clear that at first they did not receive anything remotely approaching the value of their furs, competition soon pushed up the price to at least some kind of reasonable minimum.¹³ Champlain wrote in the summer of 1611 that the Indians "wanted to wait until several ships had arrived in order to get our wares more cheaply. Thus those people are mistaken who think that by coming first they can do better business; for these Indians are now too sharp."¹⁴ Some years later Lescarbot complained that the traders "have caused every beaver skin . . . to be worth here today ten livres, when they might have been sold for one half that price if the traffic herein had been limited to one person."¹⁵

The relatively early displacement of native equipment by trade goods perhaps best indicates the importance of the trade to Indian economy. Le Jeune wrote in 1632 of the Indians, "Now that they trade with the French for capes, blankets, cloths, and shirts, there are many who use them."¹⁶ Copper kettles had so completely displaced ones made of bark that he reports the use of bark from heresay:

I am told that, before kettles were brought to them from France, they cooked their meat in bark dishes which they called "ouragana." Pierre assured me that some of them, having lost or broken their kettles, still resorted to this old custom.¹⁷

Similar references indicate the prevalent use of all manner of trade goods in the early seventeenth century.¹⁸

The argument that the fur trade became significant after the family hunting territory had been recorded as existing not only places undue emphasis on the Hudson's Bay Company but also at times entails an inadequate regard for distributional factors. Cooper writes:

The "Company of Adventures" started its first trading post in 1670 in James Bay at what is now Rupert House, and for some decades its influence did not reach beyond James and Hudson Bays, many hundreds of miles from the Penobscot-Abenaki region where the system can be traced clearly back to this very period.¹⁹

Yet a century and a half before the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company, Indians on the south shore of the St. Lawrence were most persistent in their attempts to trade with Cartier's ships, indicating their familiarity with the process,²⁰ and before 1670 furs in this area were already seriously depleted.²¹ In 1636 a visiting party of Abenakis attempted to obtain some furs from the Algonkians above Quebec.²² Champlain encountered the Penobscot in 1603, and they stated their desire "to live in peace with their enemies, in order that in future they might hunt the beaver more than they had ever done, and barter these beaver . . . in exchange for things necessary for their usage."²³ According to Denys' account of Acadia, written in 1672 after forty years of association with the Indians, the displacement of native manufactures by traded kettles, axes, knives, and iron arrowheads and spearheads was well-nigh complete in this area by the 1670's.²⁴ Trade had so advanced that the Indians were already at least partly dependent upon the fall supplies obtained from the posts²⁵ and had developed quite a system of getting the most they could for their furs by playing the traders and fishermen off against each other.²⁶

With regard to the northeastern Algonkian area in general, the distributional evidence, as far as we know it, indicates an unmistakable correlation between early centers of trade and the oldest and most complete development of the hunting territory. Trade was carried on continuously from the earliest period all along the coast of Nova Scotia and the Gaspé, where the family hunting territory has long been well established.²⁷ On the north shore of the St. Lawrence the rich fur country

MAP II



Trading Posts and Forts of the Labrador Peninsula in Operation before 1700 (Voorhis 1930; Hare 1950: 617)

south and southeast of Hudson Bay was one of the regions first exploited,²⁸ and here the Montagnais hunting territory is the most highly developed. Tadoussac was the main trading center, and the Saguenay, St. Maurice, and Ottawa rivers formed an important inland trade route, especially in periods when the Upper St. Lawrence was subject to Iroquois raids. However, Tadoussac soon gave way in importance to Quebec and Three Rivers and, later, Montreal. As the vast expanse of Canada began to open up, the push of both French and the later English companies was ever westward, leaving central and eastern Labrador to be exploited but sporadically until well into the nineteenth century.²⁹ This corresponds to the gradual fading-out of the hunting territory as one moves eastward through the peninsula.

The most conclusive evidence against the aboriginal existence of the hunting territory is not to be found in the records of early trade, however, but in the Jesuit Relations, particularly in Le Jeune's record of the winter he spent with a Montagnais band in 1633-34, and to a lesser extent in the brief account by Lalemant of the month Father Drulletes spent in 1647-48.³⁰ In both we are given a clear picture of the simple fluid socio-economic organization which is so characteristic of other hunting and gathering peoples, including the Naskapis of northern Labrador, and which is completely incompatible with the existence of the hunting-ground system as we know it.

Neither the composition of the group Le Jeune wintered with nor their ultimate destination was definitely known when they set out. Shortly after his party of nineteen left Quebec in canoes and chaloupes,³¹ they learned from another party of sixteen that "there were a great many Montagnais near the place where they wished to pass the winter," and, together with this second group, they decided "to turn Northward lest . . . [they] starve each other." However, they met ten Indians in four canoes "which turned . . . [them] back to the South, saying that the hunting was not good up north."³² The three tent groups finally decided to winter on the south shore of the St. Lawrence. Leaving their canoes and chaloupes at the coast, they went inland, shifting camp twenty-three times in the period from November 12 to April 22.³³ The winter was a hard one, since the late snowfall made it impossible to track moose successfully. One of the three tent groups was forced to leave the other two in order that they might spread out over a wider area. People from other camps who were even worse off came for help. Eventually a heavy snowfall alleviated the situation, and large game was killed in sufficient numbers so that some could

be dried. In the spring the tent group Le Jeune was with split up temporarily, some members keeping to the highlands to hunt moose, and the others following the stream beds where beavers were to be found. Gradually the entire party collected again at the coast.

Some fifteen years later Druilletes had a similar experience. He left Tadoussac with a band of some fifty people, which was soon forced to divide into two until the winter snows fell. Later the Indians Druilletes remained with were joined by others who were on the verge of starvation. Many further incidental references in the Jesuit Relations reinforce the picture we get of bands breaking up, re-forming, and moving about within relatively large areas according to the exigencies of the situation. There are no indications whatsoever of the band territories, in themselves obviously ill defined and unstable, being subdivided into anything like the family holdings of today. Yet Speck and Eiseley feel that certain phrasings of the Jesuit recorders (not of the Indians themselves) indicate property rights. For instance, the newcomers who joined Druilletes' group "were not reproved because they ran over other people's marches"³⁴ but were hospitably received and fed. Apropos of which, Speck and Eiseley write, "The fact that such charity brough comment evidences the fact that concepts of ownership were in existence."³⁵ Further they point out that, when Le Jeune mentions coming upon the trail of several other Indians, he speaks of them as "coming to hunt upon our very grounds ('sur nos marches' in the original),³⁶ taking away our game and our lives at the same time," and on another occasion, when he reports the arrival of a half-starved couple and child, he comments that they "were not asked why they came upon our boundaries" but again were welcomed and fed with the little to be had. It is hard to see how such references can be said to indicate landownership³⁷ in view of the total picture presented by Le Jeune. One can only ask what alternate phrasing one could expect him to use.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, we begin to have clear evidence that territorial hunting and trapping arrangements by individual families were developing in the area around Quebec. The earliest reference to such arrangements in this region indicates a purely temporary allotment of hunting territories. La Potherie, who was in America at the end of the seventeenth century, recounts in detail an incident involving a joint hunting party of Algonkins and Iroquois. They divide themselves into several bands in order to hunt more efficiently. It was their custom, he wrote, to appropriate pieces of land about two leagues square for each

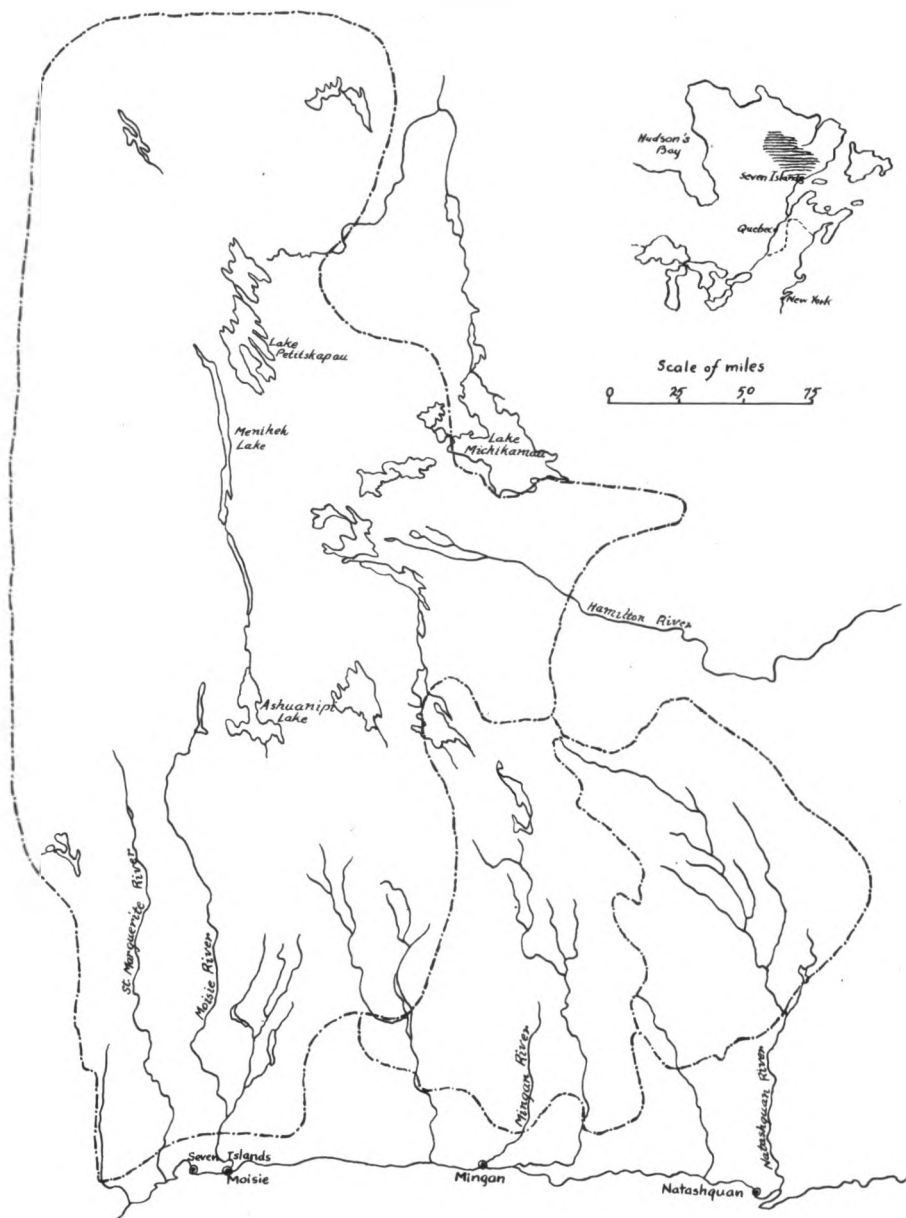
group to hunt exclusively.³⁸ "Ownership" of beaver houses, however, had already become established, and, when discovered, they were marked. A starving Indian could kill and eat another's beaver if he left the fur and the tail.³⁹

The next step toward the hunting territory was probably a seasonal allotment system. An anonymous account written in 1723 states that the "principle of the Indians is to mark off the hunting ground selected by them by blazing the trees with their crests so that they may never encroach on each other. When the hunting season comes, each family pitches its tents in the neighborhood of its chosen district, and having reconnoitered the paths taken by the beavers to their feeding ground, the traps are made." The account goes on to describe how the Indians, after preparing their furs, folded them twice and tied them in packages of forty or fifty to be brought into the post, indicating a well-developed pattern of fur-trading at this time.⁴⁰ Oldmixon, writing in 1741, refers to the Indians around James Bay as meeting in the spring to trade and to "settle the Disposition of their Quarters for Hunting, Fowling, and Fishing. Every Family have their Boundaries adjusted, which they seldom quit, unless they have not Success there in their Hunting, and then they join in with some Family who have succeeded."⁴¹ By the middle of the century these allotted territories were relatively stabilized. Henry, on the basis of firsthand experience in 1761, writes that the Algonkins of the Lake of Two Mountains "claim all the lands on the Outaovias, as far as Lake Nipissingue; and that these lands are subdivided between their several families, upon whom they have devolved by inheritance."⁴²

Unfortunately, there is little in the early accounts with which to piece together a dynamic picture of the increasing individualization of hunting and trapping which the new emphasis on fur-trading was presumably introducing into Montagnais socioeconomic organization. In any case, the hunting territory was certainly not established mechanically by either the missionaries or the traders, in spite of Le Jeune's statement of intention: "Now it will be so arranged that, in the course of time each family of our Montagnais, if they become located, will take its own territory for hunting without following in the tracks of its neighbors."⁴³ Speck and Eiseley certainly have good reason to doubt that "a few Jesuits in so vast a territory should so successfully have 'apportioned' land to wandering hunters unacquainted with such a pattern,"⁴⁴ and one must likewise agree with Cooper that there is "no indication whatsoever of an effort on the part of the traders to introduce land ownership in severalty."⁴⁵ However, to leave

the matter at this is to ignore completely the functional relationship between individualized hunting patterns and dependence upon fur-trading. This relationship can perhaps best be approached through a review of the socioeconomic organization in present-day southeastern Labrador, where the fur trade has but recently become the dominant factor in Indian economy.

MAP III



Areas Trapped by the Seven Islands, Mingan, and Natashquan Bands in the Fall of 1950

Approximate number of trappers: Seven Islands, 140; Mingan, 35; Natashquan, 25.

III / THE MONTAGNAIS-NASKAPI BAND

Speck listed eleven bands in central and southeastern Labrador.¹ Of these, five have retained their separate identities, and the other six have merged into one. The six central bands—the Petitskapau, Kaniapiskau, and Michikamau of the interior Lake Plateau and the St. Marguerite, Moisie, and Shelter Bay near the coast—have been brought together by their common interest in and dependence upon the trading post at Seven Islands. Formerly several posts were operated on the interior lakes, but, when the Indians became dependent enough upon trade to make the journey to the coast, these posts were discontinued.² The amalgamation of formerly independent units inevitably followed. Such groups as the Ashuanipi and Menihék "bands" mentioned by Hind had completely disappeared as entities when Speck worked at Seven Islands in the 1920's.³ At that time the merging of the groups farther afield was well under way, and it is all but complete at present. There are still separate encampments at the mouths of the Moisie and St. Marguerite rivers, and the Indians who live there still differentiate to some extent between those who ascend to the interior by way of one or the other as well as between the "interior" people from the Lake Plateau and the "salt-water people" who stay close to the coast. However, they are all known generally as Seven Islands Indians, both among themselves and by other bands.

The southeastern bands, from west to east, are the Mingan, Natashquan, Musquarroy or Romaine, and St. Augustin, which summer on the St. Lawrence River, and the Northwest River band, which borders them on the north. This whole area, according to the Indians, used to be "the same hunt." Hunters from the bands summering on the Gulf of St. Lawrence used to cross over the Height of Land regularly at Christmas to trade at the Northwest River post and hunt caribou above the Hamilton River. However, increasingly strong ties with their own trading posts have resulted in the crystallization of separate band boundaries. The gulf-coast bands now stay well below the Hamilton River and descend to their own posts in the middle of the winter.

Band boundaries are not yet completely established in the southeast. For instance, with the increase in the importance and popularity of Seven Islands, the center of the new mining activity, a number of Northwest

River Indians who have happened to be wintering in the western parts of their territory have descended to Seven Islands for the summer trade, thereby joining the Seven Islands band. Since such Indians feel free to return to Northwest River territory to hunt, this has resulted in the continual extension of Seven Islands territory at the expense of Northwest River. Likewise, Seven Islands hunters have been pushing out from their own overtrapped territory into what was Mingan and Natashquan territory, with as yet only mild objections from the hunters of these bands.

The movement of trading posts has obviously been the most important factor determining recent shifts in the size and location of Montagnais bands. However, it would be wrong to infer from this that increasing dependence on trade has acted to destroy formerly stable social groups. The reverse seems to be closer to the truth—that the changes brought about by the fur trade have led to more stable bands with greater formal organization.

In Speck's usage the term "band" means

a group inhabiting a fairly definite territory with a more or less stable number of families, possessing paternally inherited privileges of hunting within the tracts comprised again within the boundaries of the territory, often having an elected chief, speaking with idioms and phonetic forms by which they and outsiders distinguish themselves as composing a unit, often with minor emphasis on this or that social or religious development, often with somewhat distinctive styles of manufacture and art, and finally, travelling together as a horde and coming out to trade at a definite rendezvous on the coast. Intermarriage, in the majority of cases, is also within the families of the band.⁴

This definition applies to the western Montagnais bands, where dependence on the fur trade has been virtually complete for several decades, except for the fact that they no longer travel together as a horde. However, the most important socioeconomic integrative factors are not found, or have but recently appeared, among the eastern bands. As stated above, band territories in this area have become stabilized only in the last generation. The hunting territory is unknown. As to band membership, there is no evidence to indicate that it has not always been in constant flux. Certainly the habits of the present-day southeastern Montagnais are those of the confirmed nomad, and their attitudes toward band affiliation or attachment to a given locality are utterly casual. For instance, only seven of the twenty-six male family heads listed at Natashquan by Speck in 1926 were born members of the band, yet this was not regarded as in any way decreasing the unity and cohesion of the group. Individuals and families

frequently move from one place to another for various personal reasons, coupled with a simple desire to try some place new. Only recently have the efforts of the government, the traders, and the missionaries to make the Indians "settle down" taken real effect.

Until the present generation in the southeast, marriage was in the majority of cases outside the band, and the chief was absent or was of little importance. At Natashquan there was no band chief until recently, and his present function appears to be primarily as a liaison between the Indians and their agent. He may even be regarded to some extent as a spy for the whites. He is termed the "government" or "outside" chief and is sharply differentiated from the "real" or "inside" chiefs, who are the headmen of the multifamily units which hunt and trap together in the winter. These groups of two to five or six families are based on both friendship and kinship, which is matrilineal as well as patrilineal. Their composition changes from year to year in accordance with marriages, deaths, personal preferences, and probable amount of game. Chieftainship of the groups, which also changes from year to year, is based on general maturity and capability, prior experience in the specific area to be trapped, and number of close kin in the group. In contradiction to the individual methods best adapted to the trap line, there are strong co-operative ties within these winter groups.

The evidence suggests that these multifamily groups are the more direct successor to the basic Montagnais-Naskapi socioeconomic unit than the present-day large band. The Jesuit Relations reveal the Montagnais band of the seventeenth century to have been a small relatively unstable group of families which hunted co-operatively throughout most of the winter, breaking up into smaller units if necessary and joining with other such groups for the summer fishing season and for communal caribou hunts. Hind later gives the same impression for the Lake Plateau band—a number of families, to some extent related, continually shifting about and gathering with other such groups during the summer⁵—a picture which cannot be accounted for by the band as we know it in western Labrador today. However, it does correspond to the Naskapi band as reported by Turner and, later, by Strong. Strong mentions chieftainship as of little importance and speaks of "intermarriage and shifts of residence," which "tend to keep all these bands well mixed,"⁶ and of "a constant shifting of families from group to group within the band, or from band to band."⁷ Socially integrative features of a formal nature appear to be at a minimum, and there is no group ceremonialism. It seems

sufficient for social cohesion that the families which find themselves together during the winter are economically interdependent. In contrast, the winter hunting unit—or, more properly speaking, trapping unit—among the Mistassini and Lake St. John Montagnais is seldom more than a pair of families which is pretty much on its own.⁸ Here "the economic unit is the family," according to Lips, whereas among the bands to the north, "where all the members hunt together, it may be disputable whether or not the band, rather than the family, may be regarded as the basic economic unit."⁹

Presumably, with the transformation of the old summer fishing season into the all-important trading season, the introduction of individualized trapping methods, and the dropping-off altogether of communal caribou-hunting as this animal became virtually extinct in southwestern Labrador, the loose aggregate of small bands which traditionally gathered for the summer was strengthened at the expense of the winter hunting units, which in turn were continually shrinking in size. The result is the transformation of small and co-operative, though informal and unstable, bands of the Naskapi type to the band as it now exists in western Labrador, a loose grouping of economically independent families, stabilized and held together by territorial ties and at least minimal formal political controls.

Recent changes in the Davis Inlet and Northwest River bands seem further to bear this out. When Strong visited the Davis Inlet band some twenty-five years ago, it was a co-operative unit of some thirty-six people, wandering throughout its traditional territory in search of game and descending to the trading post infrequently and for short periods.¹⁰ For generations it had joined with other such bands from the Lake Plateau at Indian House Lake to kill the migrating caribou, to fish, to visit, and to intermarry. Recent reports are of a band about four times the size, which has become more and more dependent on trade goods and which regularly spends the summer months at Davis Inlet and Nain. With the depletion of fur in the area, the Indians have become increasingly dependent on relief, and attempts are now being made by the local missionary to introduce cod-fishing among them as a means of their sustaining an independent economy.

Tanner visited the Northwest River band in 1939 and described it as a number of multifamily groups which hunted together in traditional but ill-defined areas and descended to the Northwest River post in the summer.¹¹ Pierre Toby's account of his experience with the band indicated a tendency

toward shrinking winter hunting or trapping units, even down to the individual family, several of which had begun to trap given areas so habitually as to have more or less pre-empted them. In the summer of 1951, as far as the Indians were concerned, there was as yet no band chief, although the man who had served a former missionary as interpreter was so considered by the whites. Nor did the Indians seem to regard themselves as much of a unit. In particular, they distinguished between those who hunted to the north, branching out from Grand Lake, and those who hunted to the south, along the Hamilton River and in the Mealy Mountains, although there is continual movement of families from one group to the other. The whole "band" of about a hundred and fifty people waits impatiently near the trading post until the priest makes his visit, and then it breaks up into four or five groups which camp at the mouths of different rivers to build their canoes. These groups in turn break up into units of two, three, or four families for the fall trapping season but come together at Christmas and again in the early spring. Interestingly enough, the families which have progressed the furthest as individualized trappers have apparently left the band and become attached to the Seven Islands post.

IV / THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUNTING GROUND

Central and Southeastern Labrador

The changing structure of the Montagnais band outlined above merely expresses at one level of integration the increasing individualization of economic activity made possible, and necessary, by the fur trade—an individualization which in turn made possible, and to some extent necessary, the development of the family hunting territory. Three stages in the development of this individualization can be traced in central and southeastern Labrador. The first period is that prior to complete dependence on fur-trading and exists only in the memory of the Indians, although it is borne out by its similarity to the Naskapi as Strong found them in 1926. The second is typified by the Natashquan band, in which adjustment to the demands of fur-trapping has lagged behind the establishment of fur-trading as more important economically than hunting for game. The third is illustrated by the Seven Islands groups, which differ from white trappers only in the carry-over of some material traits, including at times a slightly, but hardly significantly, greater dependence on natural products and, more markedly, in the retention of attitudes and personal relationships more closely correlated with their past than their present way of life.

Up until about two generations ago, when my informant, Thomas Gregoire, was growing to manhood, trade was important to the Indians of southeastern Labrador as a source of guns and other material equipment but was not yet a main source of food. The Indians took only about twenty pounds of flour per family and a little salt into the interior, where they remained almost the entire year. They descended to the post briefly during the summer, and occasionally the men made quick trips in mid-winter, leaving their families "up inside." The situation was substantially similar to that recorded by Ferland a century ago, when the Indians rarely stayed by the post and took such a small supply of flour into the interior that it counted for nothing in times of real scarcity.¹ Holme, writing some thirty years later on the area in general, stated that the Indians traded furs for ammunition, clothes, and provisions, but "the provisions . . . they generally devour in a few weeks."²

The Indians were continually on the march in search of meat, and

the groups of more or less related families which hunted together and shared large communal tents were not big. For instance, Thomas' father hunted for many years with his wife's sister's husband, her mother's brother, and the latter's son. In the difficult late spring season the four families were often forced to break into two two-family units in order to spread out over a wider area in search of game. At other times several such groups would gather for communal caribou hunts. In any case, trapping was sporadic and definitely secondary. The first consideration was deer; as Thomas put it, "Maybe twenty kill'em deer; maybe thirty kill'em deer." And then furs were gone after, usually with guns but occasionally with handmade wooden traps and deadfalls. Stearns visited Old Fort Bay, farther east along the coast, in the late nineteenth century and wrote of the Indians: "They camp, and the men immediately start out on the look, first, before any hunting or trapping of other game is attended to, for deer. . . . As long as there are deer within thirty miles of the tent the Indians remain in a given place and proceed with their hunting." They dry the meat and boil the bones for fat. "When the supply of food has been assured the hunters next turn their attention to the traps," hunting primarily marten, then beaver, and, finally, otter and lynx.³

Individual family territories were obviously incompatible, aside from being unnecessary, with such hunting patterns. Nor could the small family bands be said to "own" territories. They were relatively unstable groupings which at the most hunted in the same general area for several years running. As part of a larger group which gathered for communal caribou hunts or at the summer fishing places, they were becoming attached to one or another trading post, but as yet their territories were hardly defined.

The last four or five decades have seen flour replace meat as the staple food as well as the replacement of caribou skin and birch bark by canvas and cloth for tents and canoes. Speck has already reported this. The St. Augustin band, "like all of those on the easterly coast living exclusively on the produce of the hunt depended primarily upon the caribou in former times," he writes. But now "the chief staple of caribou meat has been replaced by one of white bread for weeks at a time in the strenuous sub-arctic winter; animal fat and tallow have been replaced by manufactured lard, both bought with furs from the trading post and carried in to the hunting grounds."⁴ The Indians take about a hundred pounds of flour per person (including children) for the fall

hunt of about three months, an average of somewhat over a pound a day for an adult. The amount has been standardized in the last three years by the government, which, owing to the invasion of white trappers and the depletion of furs, has had to subsidize the Indians' winter outfits. Each family takes about ten pounds of lard per one hundred pounds of flour and some baking powder for making bread, which they bake in frying pans on top of their portable stoves. The other basic item is tea, and the Indians take little else—some sugar, beans, oats, and/or rice. In comparison, the white trapper generally takes more flour and a greater variety of supplementary food.⁵ However, the poorer basic diet of the Indian does not alter the fact that his economic adjustment is now fundamentally the same as that of the white trapper. Both can survive if necessary on their bought or traded supplies, and, although both augment them with fresh meat and fish, their dependence upon meat is reduced to the point where hunting need not seriously compete with trapping.

Furs are clearly recognized as being more important than game. In order that the men may devote full time to their trap lines, about half of the families have recently tried separating during the trapping season, the women and children staying at the coast and augmenting their flour with fish and small game. In this case, the men do not go after deer. Mathieu told of an instance when he and his comrades, who were trapping without their families, actually had not bothered tracking down some deer they knew were in the neighborhood. They had sufficient supplies so that it was not worth while for them to leave their trap lines and pursue the game. "No family, no kill'em deer," he said. "Man alone no kill deer. Too heavy bring back. Eat flour, porcupine, rabbits, fish. Long ago, see'em deer, kill'em. No flour. Got no eat. Got to kill'em deer." Speck reported a similar situation at St. Augustin. "The Indians killed only ten [deer] this last winter," he wrote. "They could have taken more had they gone further northeast but they preferred to trap for fur to trade rather than to hunt for food."⁶

The Seven Islands Indians, who trap along the lower courses of the Moisie and St. Marguerite rivers, have been dependent upon the fur trade for a much longer period than the Indians farther east, and they have completely adopted the white trapper's system in all its essentials. The white trapper has several hundred traps which are left where they are set from year to year. He has usufruct rights to his line as long as he continues to use it. Legally he could pay taxes and retain his right

without consistent use, but he generally does not, and in actual fact the likelihood of another trapper taking over his line should he leave it unworked a winter or two is very doubtful. He has several cabins or "tilts" along his line, each a day's journey from the next, and he travels continually back and forth. He leaves his family at the coast and, in the interest of efficiency, generally works alone, although maintaining regular contact with the trappers whose lines border his. An adolescent son may trap with him for a while, but the youth soon graduates to his own line.

The Indian trappers near Seven Islands also have relatively permanent lines of several hundred traps. Although most still live in tents, many have built tilts. Families may be left at the coast or may stay at some central point on the trap line. On the whole, the Indians still prefer to work in pairs, although, as Speck and Eiseley write, "the father of a family who has sons coming into activity will let the boys hunt one section while he does another. They plan to meet together only about once a month, during the course of the winter."⁷

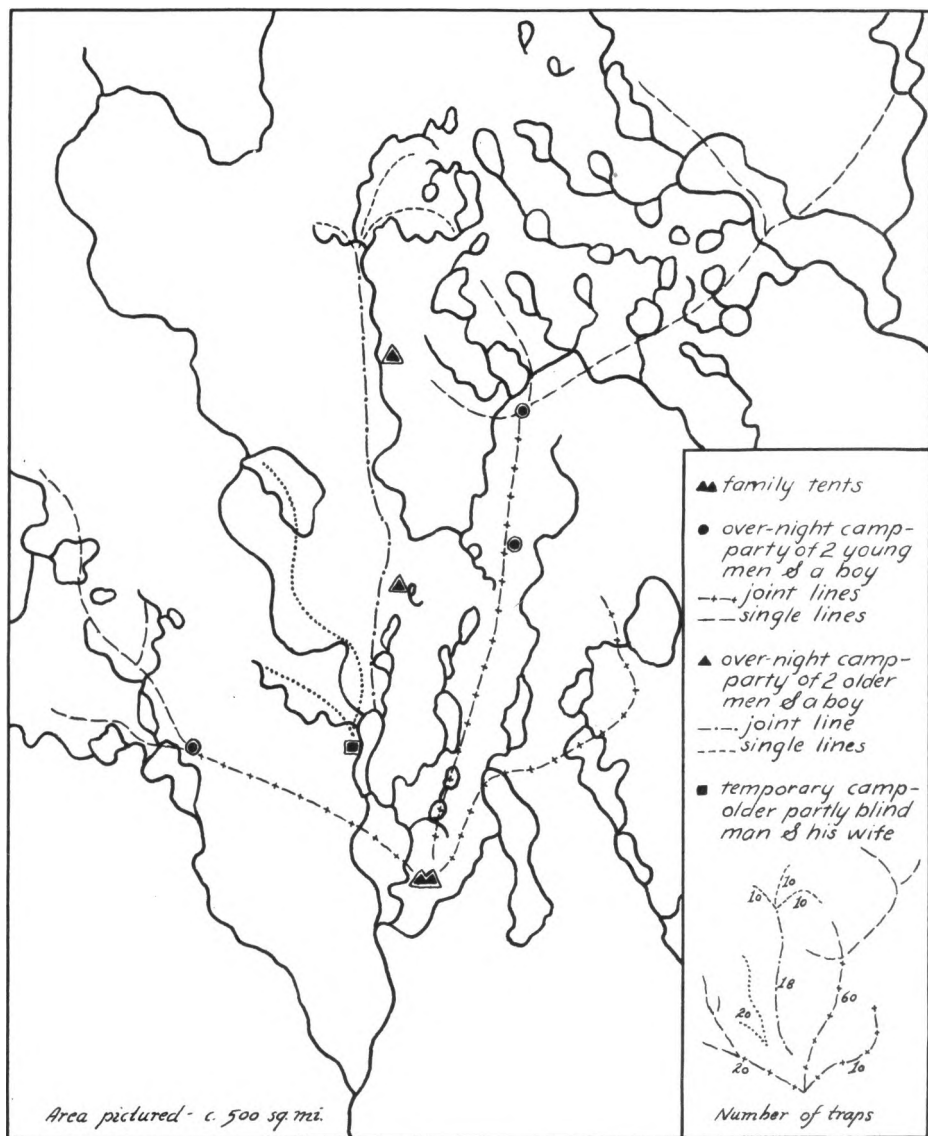
The family hunting territory is relatively well developed along the Lower Moisie and St. Marguerite rivers. However, it is less stable than that of the Montagnais farther west, and there are several differences which support the contention that at Seven Islands it represents a less advanced stage of acculturation. To the west, ownership of a trapping territory includes ownership of all the beaver houses on it, whether discovered or not. Houses are marked as they are found and owned by the individual finder within the family.⁸ This does not hold for Seven Islands. Anyone passing through a territory may mark an undiscovered beaver house. It then becomes his property irrespective of who "owns" the land. At Seven Islands houses are marked by family heads, and there is no individual ownership within the family. An unmarried boy's catch goes to his father, who handles all important transactions at the store. Among the western bands an unmarried but mature son keeps his own skins apart and handles his own sales.⁹ This greater emphasis on individualized effort is probably due in part to the fact that not only the fur trade but lumbering and other industries appeared earlier in western Labrador. The western Montagnais have been accustomed for a longer time to picking up temporary jobs and familiarizing themselves with a cash economy.

The present hunting patterns east of Seven Islands, as typified by

those of the Natashquan band, seem to represent a lag between all but complete dependence upon fur-trapping and the full development of the socioeconomic patterns best adapted to it. The Indians ascend to the interior in multifamily groups which either agree before leaving or decide as they approach the upper branches of the Natashquan River on where they will trap. In the latter case, a party sets up a signal stick at the fork of the river to indicate its chosen location, either inviting certain other families to join it or indicating that it is a large enough group for the area to be trapped. After a slow trip of two or three weeks, the party arrives and sets up the winter camp. Several weeks are spent making snowshoes, sleds, and toboggans and preparing in general for the winter. Trap lines are laid out in late October in preparation for the best trapping months of November and December. The Indians must return to the post for supplies around Christmas, and for some years they have remained there during January and the "windy month" of February. In March and early April either the men alone or their entire families go back into the interior, although not in the same groupings or to the same places. In recent years, with the depletion of furs, plus the growing need and desire of the Indians for the material comforts of the whites, parties of men trap muskrat along the lower courses of the rivers during May and June.

Formerly the Indians never traveled with more than their canoes could handle in one load. Now, transporting one's entire family plus an adequate supply of flour means making the trip into the interior in relays, taking either the families or the supplies ahead for a day or a half-day's journey and returning for another load. This is a further reason why for the last three years many families have tried separating, with the women and the children staying at the coast. Neither sex likes this arrangement, and usually a family that has tried it one year will remain together the next. However, the winter camp in the interior has been for some time a compromise in this direction. The families generally stay in a permanent winter camp at a more or less central location in the area to be trapped. Since a man's trap line may be laid out as much as a five- or six-day trip away from the camp, he may return home no oftener than every two or three weeks. It is only a step from this arrangement to the women and children simply remaining at the coast altogether. The government is discouraging this latter practice, with the probable result that a permanent winter camp will develop a short way into the interior.

MAP IV



Typical Trapping Arrangement, Natashquan Band (from a Sketch by Mathieu Medikabo)

In spite of their awareness that trapping as individuals is more efficient, the Indians prefer to remain in parties of up to ten or so men. For the sake of efficiency they use the same trap paths year after year and have made well-defined trails through the thick forest. However, they use them in such a way as to maintain a semblance of their former co-operative nomadic patterns. Each individual takes up his traps and lays them anew on a different path each season, or perhaps oftener, in a line common to two, three, or four men. The lines are so arranged that the older men can return nightly to the big tents where the families stay, and younger partners who work farther away can always meet to sleep together in a little tent.

A man uses from twenty to fifty traps, depending on his age, health, and ability. He is not prevented solely by financial considerations from owning two or three hundred traps and making a permanent line, for the trader will generally give him more traps on credit. Several Indians do, in fact, already own upward of a hundred traps but do not use them all. This is due to the fact that traps are usually left "up inside" in the spring, and their owners may not return to or pass through the area where they are and reclaim them. Pierre Toby, for instance, had left three caches of traps which he probably will never see again in different parts of the Lake Plateau.

Within the very fluid patterns we have been describing, there are indications of a trend toward individual territories at Natashquan. Certain individuals change around with'n the limits of three or four possible trapping districts, and certain others have returned so consistently to the same area for the fall season as to have acquired a kind of priority over it. There is no resentment on the part of the Indians to individuals who are beginning to pre-empt territories. The resistance is rather in the other direction, for, on the whole, there appears to be considerable reluctance to becoming attached to any one area. This was mentioned from time to time during the summer and was brought out clearly by one instance. A plan for beaver conservation has been successfully introduced in western Labrador, and an initial attempt was being made to institute it in the east. However, it is not suited to this area, since it is based on relatively stable family hunting territories. The Indians gathered in the meeting tent and heard it outlined. An outspoken middle-aged man rose to object, explaining that it was impractical to hunt the same territory year after year; one had to shift around. More-

over, the Indians hunted as groups, not as individuals. The government official, through a local interpreter, put the matter simply: either the Indians co-operate or there could be no restocking of beaver. The Indians agreed and chose territories, but mostly as groups, not as individuals, and for the most part on the basis of where they had decided to hunt the following winter. After the meeting, Thomas Gregoire, who is among those most desirous of adopting the white man's customs, said that he was going to gather together all his traps and lay them permanently like a white man. It subsequently became apparent, however, that the plan would not be generally followed. The orientation of the band as a whole had not sufficiently shifted away from traditional communal patterns to adopt such a system, particularly in view of the fact that there was none too strong a conviction among them that the government would come through with its end of the bargain.

However, cases of bona fide individual hunting territories are not unknown in eastern Labrador. Alice Peter's father was an Abenaki who presumably had long known the hunting territory system. He had crossed the St. Lawrence and married into the Northwest River group. He built a log cabin on the Hamilton River and pre-empted the surrounding territory. Yet his sons moved away, following the more traditional Montagnais-Naskapi pattern. There have been two similar instances, one at St. Augustin and one at Romaine, where individuals have pre-empted territories and laid stable trap lines "like the white man's." They likewise existed only temporarily and in sharp contrast to the general hunting patterns of the Romaine and St. Augustin bands.

The Lake Plateau contains a whole series of forms transitional to the hunting territory. There are certain areas pre-empted by individuals after the pattern of the coastal area and the white trappers, others over which a temporary and more casual priority is from time to time exerted, and others which until recently "belonged" to those family groupings which persisted as a remnant of the various independent bands. A major portion remains as yet "free." Tanner felt that the existence of two territories claimed by a Mathieu Andre and a Pierre Gabriel, but not accepted as theirs by the group as a whole, to be evidence of a formerly existing system which has been broken up by the effects of fur-trapping.¹⁰ However, aside from the weight of the evidence against this hypothesis from the area as a whole, the specific history of the two territories mentioned does not bear it out. Mathieu Andre's father had hunted north of the

Hamilton River with a group of related families. His grandfather not only had shifted freely around in the Michikamau area but in the last years of his life had changed his affiliation from Seven Islands to Northwest River. Mathieu is an enterprising man who opened a store on an interior lake south of the Hamilton, which he supplied by airplane. He laid out a long and permanent trap line near the store and asserted his exclusive right to the area. When last heard of, however, he had left trapping altogether to work on the railroad leading to the recently discovered iron mine. In the case of Pierre Gabriel's territory, it was hunted only a generation ago by a group of related families who represented at least part of the old Petitskapau band and who roamed freely throughout this and the surrounding areas.

The contemporary instances of hunting territories on the Lake Plateau promise to have a more lasting effect than former cases, for the orientation of the group as a whole has shifted toward the acceptance of individualized trapping methods. This is indicated by the general acceptance of the government's conservation plan. In addition, there is at least one important difference between older and modern territories. The men who temporarily instituted the system at St. Augustin and Romaine hunted jointly with one or more other band members and followed the traditional rules for division of beaver, whereas the present-day territories on the Lake Plateau are worked by individuals assisted by their growing sons.

The reaction of my informants at Natashquan to Mathieu Andre's territory indicated their reluctance to accept the idea of exclusive individual rights. Ignoring Pierre's statement that Andre trapped alone with his son, Thomas and Mathieu explained to me how Indians felt about common rights to trapping grounds. "Indian all time change," said Mathieu. "One year no find money—change—maybe find money," which, interestingly enough, was Mathieu's invariable phrase for catching furs. If one man sees mink or marten tracks in a given area, other families also go there to trap, just as, when a white man hears of work for four dollars a day, others also go to get the work. If one were to ask Andre if there are plenty of furs on his territory, and he said "Yes, but no hunt this one," one would hunt there just the same. "Not just like money Mathieu Andre; all like'em money Indian." These were merely assertions, however, of how Thomas and Mathieu felt it should be. At a later session I returned to the subject and asked Pierre again whether other

Indians could hunt near Mathieu's lines. Thomas interpreted simply, quietly, sadly, "No. No hunt this one the other man." Mathieu did not disagree, and their silence was eloquent.

The rules for dividing furs among the southeastern Montagnais are apparently a compromise between old and new patterns. They are based on a differential attitude toward shooting, which is tied up with traditional sharing of game, and trapping, which has brought with it the emphasis on individual acquisition of fur. All game caught for consumption is still shared within the group, unless it is too small to bother with, and is and always has been for the most part killed with a gun or a bow and arrow. The rule for dividing fur-bearing animals, as stated by the Indians, is that those shot with a gun are divided "half and half" and that those caught in traps are individually owned. Muskrats are an exception to this rule. They are trapped but are divided. This is perhaps due to the fact that they bring very little return, the skins selling for a dollar or two, coupled with the informal nature of the spring trapping party, which is akin to a group of men setting off on a joint hunt. In fact, in the spring muskrat season some men may choose to hunt caribou for the entire camp instead of trapping. Bearskins are not kept to be sold by the finder either but are given to one of the older men. This traditional custom is probably related to the western Montagnais attitude toward bear. Upon killing his first bear, a boy is considered mature and can, and usually does, open his own account at the Hudson's Bay Company.¹¹

The temporary and informal "chief" of the hunting party is responsible for dividing those furs that are shot. They are not shared equally but are divided on the basis of need, the size of a man's family and the extent of his debt at the store being two of the principal considerations. Mathieu and two other men caught sixteen beavers one fall. Mathieu was "chief," and he took as his share two large and two small beavers, allotting to the others three large and three small and four large and two small beavers, respectively. I asked why this division, since all three had big families, and found that it was also partly because the other two men both had large "accounts" at the store. But there was apparently an additional reason; the very fact that Mathieu was responsible made him take less, so that there would be no danger of hard feelings on the part of the others. In other respects where money was concerned, there was also a certain uneasiness and tension. Thomas, for instance, disliked accepting the responsibility for dividing the money for a joint session among himself, Pierre, and Mathieu.

Differential attitudes toward transactions concerning money and those concerning direct production for consumption parallel the distinction between trapping and shooting. For instance, the Indians are Catholics and obey the sanction against work on Sunday. By "working," however, they mean trapping or anything which involves money. They said that they would not tend their lines on a Sunday, but they would and did hunt for game. The distinction they make was revealed by innumerable incidents of everyday camp life. Canoes, guns, and other equipment are lent freely when they are to be used for the acquisition of wood, meat, or skins for direct use. The only return expected is some share of the products if the expedition is successful. On the other hand, a gun or canoe must be rented and paid for if it is to be used either for fur-trapping or in direct work for the whites on a salary basis. Even the smallest money transactions may be considered apart, and kept separate, from the traditional reciprocal relations based on kinship and close friendship. For instance, a seal caught during the summer was to be made into moccasins for use. The skin was prepared by a relative of the owner in return for the stomach. Nowhere was money involved. In another instance, a sealskin was to be made into moccasins for sale. It was prepared by someone outside the immediate circle of family and friends in return for a small fee. Other cases concerned the reciprocal relation between father-in-law and son-in-law. Matrilocality appears formerly to have been more common than patrilocality throughout central and southeastern Labrador, and there are still strong ties between a man and his daughter's husband. The father-in-law makes canoes and snowshoe frames for his son-in-law, who, in turn, shares small catches of meat or fish with him. Yet during the summer, when a young couple decided that the wife would string some snowshoes to sell at the store, the man did not ask his father-in-law to make the frames but paid another for the work. The father-in-law later commenced work on a canoe for the young man, who several times brought him some fish. Yet the young wife charged her father twenty-five cents for a lamp we borrowed one evening at a late session, since it was being used in work for which the older man was paid!

The money economy, however, has not yet completely imposed its own patterns even in relation to fur-bearing animals. The joint raiding of a beaver house in the winter is an excellent example of persisting cooperative habits in direct contradiction to individual interest. All who help in the work of digging out a house and shooting the beavers receive a share of the furs. At Seven Islands a man who discovers a house will

in all likelihood dig it with the help of one other person, preferably his own son. Yet at Natashquan a man does not consider limiting the number of people who will help him raid a house. Thomas Gregoire had discovered a house when alone one spring and had returned to raid it the following winter with three other men. When I asked why he had not returned with fewer men in order to have a larger share of the beavers, he saw little sense to my question. He explained that digging through the ice was hard work and that, the more men who helped, the better. In another instance, two members of a party which discovered a house were not able to return when the rest decided to. Rather than wait for them, two other men went in their place, and there was not the slightest suggestion that the two discoverers who were not present at the kill should have any share in the catch.

The staking of beaver houses and the conservation of their inmates, which are related to individual interest in and control of a territory, are almost unknown at Natashquan. The western Montagnais farms his territory by marking his houses, ascertaining the number of beavers in them, and always leaving at least a pair. At Natashquan the concept of conservation extends only to leaving a house for a year or two for its occupants to multiply, a practice possibly resulting from the discovery of beaver houses in the spring, when the fur is unmarketable, so that one must return the following winter. When a house is raided, all the beavers are taken. The Indians say that there would be no point in leaving any beavers. Not only may the Indians themselves never get around to returning but the beavers, they say, like the Indians, move around. They maintain that beavers muddy up a pond and after several years leave it for a fresh one. A beaver house which is discovered in the spring and left is not marked. It suffices for the discoverer to inform other band members of its location. In the last two years one Indian has begun to mark houses—a young man who habitually hunts near the band boundary where Seven Islanders, whose own territory is overcrowded, have been known to trespass. During the spring of 1950, trespassers from Seven Islands raided two other claimed but unmarked houses but respected this man's stake.

This recent introduction of beaver-house marking in the case of one individual and the appearance of rudimentary forms of conservation, along with the rules for sharing game and the nature of the trap line, demonstrate the slow substitution of individualized patterns for co-

operative patterns, the ultimate conclusion of which process is the development of the family hunting territory. It is impossible to say how rapidly this aspect of Montagnais acculturation will be completed in southeastern Labrador, or whether it will be allowed to come to completion. It is more likely that the depletion of furs, coupled with the industrial development of Labrador through mining, will present the Indians with new and more drastic adjustments to make. Under such adverse circumstances it may lead, as all too often in the case of the American Indian, to the impossibility of their maintaining a stable enough economy to enable the building of any coherent social patterns.

Southwestern Labrador

In western Labrador, as we have seen, the process of adjustment to the trapping and trading of fur as economically prior to hunting was started earlier and appears to have arrived at a relatively satisfactory stage of completion. While the early records fail to show the first stages of the process, more recent material does give some clue to the final stages. Spaced over the past century, we have the invaluable records left by the Hudson's Bay factors of the Mistassini post for the 1820's and 1830's, several allusions by Low in the 1880's and 1890's, and Lips's account of contemporary law-ways among the Mistassini and Lake St. John Montagnais, supplemented by a few other recent papers on the area.

A century ago caribou were still relatively plentiful in the Mistassini and Lake St. John region and still of crucial importance to Indian economy.¹² Theoretically, it might seem a simple matter to incorporate fur-trading as a supplementary activity to hunting in a simple acquisitive economy. In actual practice this apparently was not so. Competition between trapping for small fur-bearing animals and hunting for large game is referred to continually in the Mistassini records. For instance, we read that one Wapatch "made a very poor hunt" during the winter of 1833-34, which the factor "can only attribute to his taken up the most of his time in killing deer," the same being true of Pemasson, who "likewise has taken up the most of his time in going after deer."¹³ The factors continually complain of one or another Indian who "seldom hunts or thinks of paying his debt," who "never hunts anything worth mentioning," or who "hunts little at all times,"¹⁴ in contrast to others who are "good hunters" and bring in furs. "Many of the Mistassini Indians are in a very wretched condition as to

food and clothing," wrote the factor in 1823. "This is owing entirely to their indolence, for notwithstanding all that can be said to them—they seem determined not to hunt."¹⁵ By this he meant, of course, to hunt fur-bearing animals. It became part of the Hudson's Bay factor's duties to induce the Indians to go after furs. In this same period, McLean was given the responsibility of opening trading posts farther north at Fort Chimo, and he mentions the importance of the caribou to the Naskapi and their independence of the whites:

As trading posts, however, are now established on their lands, I doubt not but artificial wants will, in time, be created. They may become as indispensable to their comfort as their present real wants. All the arts of the trader are exercised to produce such a result, and those arts never fail of ultimate success. Even during the last two years of my management, the demand for certain articles of European manufacture has greatly increased.¹⁶

In the Mistassini area one W. M. Clark reported:

The following day after I came to the Indians they asked me to go after some deer with them, which I complied with to please them for the sake of drawing all their attachment towards the Honorary Company's servants. . . . I stopped with them five days trying all I could to get them to trap martins. . . . Since I had been at the trouble of assisting them to kill deer I now expected they would endeavor to catch some—which they agreed to and promised to do all they could.¹⁷

Apparently the margin of subsistence was too narrow and the return for furs too small to enable the Indians easily to give up time from deer-hunting. Such entries are not uncommon:

Missenahegganish: is a good hunter but having been very nigh starved to death last winter—prevented him from hunting so well as usual.¹⁸

Seestick . . . was starving all winter, which prevented him from hunting more as he did.¹⁹

In even more extreme cases furs themselves were used as food:

Potish . . . could have brought more had he not been obliged to eat 20 beaver skins when he was starving.²⁰

The late Missinnahagonish's son. A young lad and a pretty good hunter, but did not so well as last year, as he was induced to eat some of his beaver skins, to keep soul and body together.²¹

Although the fur trade did not supply the Indians with anything like a major portion of their food, it did furnish them with much of their material equipment; and, although their produce may not always have satisfied the Hudson's Bay Company, yet they had already made considerable concessions

to the demands of fur-trapping. There appears to have been far greater individualization of activity than in the seventeenth century, though not to the degree that is found today. In fact, the picture we can build up from the Mistassini reports is in many ways comparable to the present situation in southeastern Labrador. The individual hunter was emerging as an independent unit, yet, on the other hand, there are constant references to shifting alliances and mutual assistance between friends and relatives. For instance:

Tootcheesaiquon. Brother to Napaishish, and a very good fur hunter, but has hunted very few furs this year, having wintered with the deceased Cuiapawisit who he was obliged to haul about and preserve provisions for and for all the family of the late Achappy whose daughter he has for a wife.²²

And Weshirashish, who "generally goes with Chushmooshommahan,"²³ or Etap, who "goes with Wapatch."²⁴

Furs were privately owned and were traded by the older men, or, in some cases, by the women, but not yet by the young unmarried boys. Apparently beavers discovered out of season were left to be taken in the fall. The same Tootchesaiquon mentioned above made a poor hunt another year "principally owing to their canoes having been spoiled by the cold weather in winter, which prevented them from going to where they had known of a few beaver loges in proper time."²⁵ There is no indication of conservation being practiced. In fact, during the period when the Mistassini diaries were being written, the Hudson's Bay Company council was continually recommending the introduction of at least minimal forms of conservation in Canada and made no mention of any system already existing in any part of their territory.²⁶

Traditional hunting territories were apparently developing, although there were as yet no recognized sanctions protecting the beavers on them. Reference is made to an Indian who "did very little in the fur way last winter, owing, as he says, to so many Indians hunting upon his lands,"²⁷ and to another who did not do so well, "which he attributes to other Indians having gone over his grounds before he got to them last fall."²⁸ On the other hand, some priority of rights is indicated in the case of one Etapao, who married into the band and was not given "his own" land. He is referred to as "a middling fur hunter" who "would be a good one if he had lands which he could call his own. But as that is not [the] case he is obliged to keep about the outskirts of other Indians' lands, and when he stays with any of them he can kill no beaver

except what they choose to allow him."²⁹ There is no clue as to precisely how the above relates to the freedom of movement indicated by the preceding notations, but there are two conclusions concerning land tenure that can be drawn from Etapao's case. First, an individually "owned" trapping ground was not yet considered a necessity as it would be today and, second, the band was not yet organized in such a way that it could allocate grounds to a new member. In any case, the hunting territories were not stabilized to any great degree, as indicated both by the reference to transitory partnerships and by the obvious possibility of moving around relatively freely. Etapao did, after all, trap enough to rate as "middling." The Indian Cheeskatawatuith

did not do so much this year as what he did the year before, which he attributes to the Indian Paitabunowescome of Ruperts House whom he met this spring on the lands where he expected to find beaver and found himself quite disappointed, as the other men had come there last fall and had passed the winter thereabouts. When he knew all this he intended to go further on but then he was informed that his uncle Natcheecapaw had been to the very place where he was thinking of going to.³⁰

In another case a man ordinarily did not hunt on his "own lands":

It was this Indian and his sons whom I was fearful had gone off to Swobmooshwon—instead of which it appears they went on their own lands near Nimmishkau, where they hunted most of their furs—their have gone so far off was the reason they did not visit the Post last fall and so often during the winter as usual.³¹

The course of the nineteenth century saw the depletion of big game throughout the Mistassini and Lake St. John area.³² At the end of the century, Low mentions the Mistassini Indians as already largely dependent upon the fur trade, in contrast to the Naskapi farther north and east, who still lived primarily on caribou.³³ Lips is a little confusing on this point. He speaks of "vital" and "essential" supplies like flour, which must be obtained through the fur harvest,³⁴ but later mentions traded food supplies as "merely additions."³⁵ However, the purchase lists of two Indians which he reproduces,³⁶ considered in relation to the scarcity of large game animals in the Mistassini region, suggest that traded supplies are essential for food as well as equipment. "Wherever possible," he writes, "meat and fish are served together with banock, the Indian bread," but, "quite frequently, the banock is the only food available."³⁷ In addition, Lips gives a figure of 450 traps as the average for a family³⁸—a figure which corresponds to that of the Seven Islands families, where trapping for furs is more basic than hunting game.

The virtual completion of the shift in native economy from hunting for consumption to trapping for exchange was presumably paralleled by the progressive stabilization of territories and individualization of trapping which have resulted in the Mistassini and Lake St. John family hunting ground system of today. Not that this process is entirely complete. As was pointed out earlier, the territories are still somewhat fluid, and few hunters function completely as individuals after the fashion of white trappers. Lips reports that the single family of father, mother, and children seldom hunts alone. Generally brothers or neighbors hunt together, alternating from one family hunting ground to another.³⁹ On the other hand, furs are personally owned even within the family, conservation is understood and practiced, and there are band mechanisms for the regulation of individual land holdings.

A word should be said about the effect of the coureurs de bois and later Europeans who married into or otherwise joined the Indian group. While not a basic factor in the changing socioeconomic structure of the Montagnais, they must have had some effect on the speed with which European goods were adopted, and, owing to their understanding of money and its relation to individual effort, they must have aided the introduction of the more efficient individual trapping methods. Caron gives a figure of eight hundred Frenchmen who had left the colonies to live in the woods by 1680,⁴⁰ and a great many, if not most, of these must have either joined Indian bands or married Indian women.⁴¹ According to Parkman, these men often became leaders in the Indian camp.⁴² This has certainly been true in more recent times on the east coast of Labrador. The "founder" of the Davis Inlet band was a Scotchman,⁴³ and informants at Northwest River said that, whereas there was no band chief at present, two generations ago there had been one, likewise a Scotchman, who had married an Indian woman and joined the group.

In addition to the effect of those whites who went to live with the Indians, there has been the example of the white trappers working parallel to them. Individual Indians in eastern Labrador occasionally work a white trapper's line for a season or two, and the eastern bands in general are well aware of the economic advantages of such permanent lines. Hard pressed by necessity, they are now somewhat unwillingly giving up more and more of their traditional way of life, and moving in the direction of trapping, as they put it, "like the white man."

V / COMPARATIVE MATERIAL

There are several studies which support the assumption that the development of the family hunting-ground system among the Montagnais of Labrador is typical not only of the northeastern Algonkians in general but to some extent of the Arctic hunters as a whole. According to Jenness, family territorial rights among the Parry Island Ojibway have developed since the coming of the Europeans. Formerly "the bands were more migratory than they are today, their territories not restricted by white settlement, game more plentiful, and the smaller fur-bearing animals of little importance."¹ Jenness continues:

The . . . variety and seasonal nature of their foods kept the Indians in constant motion. . . . At certain seasons a whole band might camp together for a few days or weeks, but then the exigencies of the food supply would bring about its dispersal into small groups of perhaps four or five families each. These small groups again would dissipate, and the families roam about individually, but keep in touch with neighboring families through certain signs and signals.²

Under these conditions, hunting grounds, fishing places, and maple groves were jointly owned by the entire band. With the coming of the whites, colonization and its consequent restriction of territory, trading posts, and the fresh emphasis on small fur-bearing animals, along with the necessity for maintaining their numbers, placed new importance on landownership. Within the recent past the family territory has developed. Interestingly enough, the maple groves, which are in no way connected with trade, are still communally owned.³

In the Athabaskan area a similar process has been recorded in at least two cases. Steward observed that only recently has Carrier socio-economic organization shifted its base from loose, mobile, and co-operative bands to individual families with inherited rights to registered trapping grounds divided among children. An intermediate phase was a matrilineal moiety system with well-defined moiety lands.⁴ Jenness writes of the Sekani:

In the earliest times of which we have record the Sekani were divided into bands, each of which possessed its own hunting territory. Sometimes the individual families scattered and hunted separately, sometimes they wandered in groups of two or three; yet just as frequently, perhaps, they held together for mutual support and moved

as a unit from one place to another within their domain. There were no family hunting grounds, no districts of which a family or small group of families claimed exclusive possession. Family rights to special hunting grounds have come only in recent times, after the fur trade induced the Indian to return year after year to the same trapping district and to conserve its supply of beaver. Even today the change from band to family ownership of districts is not complete; the entire band claims the final possession of any district within its area, and if for any reason one family fails to occupy its usual trapping ground another does not hesitate to take its place.⁵

Speck and Cooper consider such territorial rights as exist among the Paleo-Asiatics an additional support for their points of view,⁶ but, strictly speaking, the Yukaghir are the only group that should be included in a discussion of purely hunting and gathering economies. Some thirty years ago Jochelson observed among the Yukaghir a changing situation similar in many respects to that which we have been examining. In an earlier period the Yukaghir lived entirely on the products of the hunt, often scattering "in separate families, or groups of related families, in search of food."⁷ Fish and game were distributed among clan members,⁸ and land was jointly owned. "The property rights of the ancient Yukaghir did not extend to territory. Any one could live on whatever river he pleased, and thus join one or another clan."⁹ By the time of Jochelson's study, however, the elk which had been the most important game animal was all but exterminated, and the wild reindeer had also lost its importance as game.¹⁰ The emphasis was now on fur-bearing animals.¹¹ When furs first became important, they were turned over to the oldest man in the family, who paid tribute or debts with them or bartered them with the traders. "This privilege of the old men is becoming less exclusive, however. The grown-up members of the family (i.e., the people whose labor procures the fur) frequently take some of the furs for their own use, without asking permission of the old men. The most successful hunters are usually more independent in the use of the products of the hunt."¹² In particular, the son-in-law keeps his own furs very often rather than turning them over to his father-in-law.¹³ More and more women take fish they have caught to the trader for cloth and other goods, rather than dividing them among neighboring families. However, meat is still generally shared; and, in spite of the fact that "furs belong exclusively to the hunter who killed the animals," the custom persists whereby, if one of two hunters working together kills a fur-bearing animal and the other nothing, the latter takes the hide. Otherwise the luck of the hunter might turn.¹⁴

To return to this continent, the conclusion that the development of the northeastern Algonkian family hunting territory is recent brings another area into the new picture of aboriginal North America being built up by contemporary historical research. There have been studies of the fur trade and pressure from white settlers as intensifying Iroquois political organization and patterns of warfare; of the surplus produced by the fur trade as causing the extreme exaggeration and distortion of Northwest Coast potlatching; of the importance of trading in the formation of the "typical" Plains culture of the nineteenth and late eighteenth centuries. "Acculturation" is now recognized as encompassing more than the final breakdown of Indian societies, which has come about all too often with the tremendous expansion and industrialization of America in the last century. It is becoming increasingly evident that Indian tribal life as recorded in the nineteenth and even late eighteenth centuries reflected important changes which had already come about as a result of the Indians taking an active part in the world-wide growth of trade and commerce; in other words, we are here dealing with a "successful" phase of acculturation. The present study has taken the position that the northeastern Algonkians are no exception. Their apparent "primitivity" is deceptive. In order to reconstruct their aboriginal culture, one cannot simply record their recent life and subtract those traits that are of obvious European origin. One must work from an understanding that fundamental socioeconomic changes have been taking place in some parts of their area for over three hundred years, one aspect of which is the development of the family hunting territory.

NOTES

Notes to Foreword

1. Speck 1931.
2. Speck and Eisely 1942.

Notes to Chapter I

1. Speck 1926b: 327.
2. It should be mentioned that inheritance rules are by no means consistently patrilineal. Matrilineality also operates to a considerable extent (Lips 1947: 437; Speck 1917: 91-94, 97-98; 1923: 462).
3. Hallowell 1949: 42; Speck 1923: 464-70; 1927: 388.
4. Lips 1947: 430.
5. Hallowell 1949: 42; Lips 1947: 427.
6. Lips 1947: 428. Cooper, more strongly than Speck, takes the position that the hunting-territory system involves "true" ownership "in our sense of the term" (Cooper 1939: 70-71; 1948: 221).
7. Lips 1937: 224; 1947: 432.
8. Burgesse 1945: 12; Cooper 1939: 69; Grenfell 1909: 203-4; Lips 1947: 429, 432-33; Speck 1927: 390.
9. Lips 1937: 224.
10. Lips 1947: 432.
11. Lips 1947: 443.
12. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 241. Also Cooper 1939: 81-82; 1941: 59-60; Speck and Eiseley 1939: 277-78; 1942: 238-42.
13. Jesuit Relations (Thwaites) 4: 203; 5: 89, 141, 143, 157, 167, 179; 6: 271, 277; 7: 9, 47, 107; 8: 29, 31; 9: 119; etc. Also Champlain 1: 101, 119; 2: 45, 177; Le Clercq 1881: 136; Lescarbot 2: 343; 3: 222; Sagard-Théodat 1866, 1: 40; 2: 585, 681-82, 823.
14. Jesuit Relations 8: 181.
15. Jesuit Relations 8: 121-95.
16. Jesuit Relations 8: 57. Also Burgesse 1945: 14-15; Leechman 1945: 16. Also, for the Micmac, Denys 1908: 432.
17. Hallowell 1949: 42.
18. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 219.
19. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 220.
20. Hubbard 1908: 172.
21. Strong 1929: 285.

22. Turner 1894: 276.
23. Cooper 1946: 292.
24. Speck 1936: 318.
25. Speck 1936: 314.
26. Speck 1936: 320.
27. Speck 1926a: 275.
28. Tanner 1947, 2: 647.
29. Tanner 1947, 2: 648.
30. Tanner 1947: 634-35. By "social organization" Tanner means an extended family attached to a hunting territory as the basic social unit.
31. Herskovits 1940: 328-29. Firth (1939: 7) mentions as one characteristic difference between primitive economies in general and European the tendency to work for things directly and not for the medium through which they are procured.
32. A principle outlined by Steward (1936: 332) as true of most peoples living at a relatively simple economic level.
33. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 235.
34. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 235.
35. Lips (1947: 390) says a family could formerly handle only 150 wooden traps, while now a family of western Montagnais handles an average of 450 steel traps.
36. Bailey 1937: 84-88.
37. Bailey 1937: 87.
38. Bailey 1937: 88.
39. Jenness 1935: 5.
40. Steward 1936: 339.

Notes to Chapter II

1. Cooper 1939: 72-80. Cooper carried the argument further than Speck. He was interested in traits held in common by all marginal peoples, and, on the basis of early accounts in this area and world-wide comparative material, he felt that some system of land "ownership" was common to all hunting-gathering tribes (1939: 84; 1946: 293, 301). However, in his discussion of other areas, he failed to differentiate clearly between the family and the band as the owning group, and this is, after all, the point at issue (1939: 83-84, 89-90).
2. Cooper 1939: 73.
3. Speck and Eiseley 1939: 270.
4. Speck and Eiseley 1939: 270; Cooper 1939: 82-83.
5. Bailey 1937: 6-7; Biggar 1901: 28-29; Greenbie 1929: 55-56.
6. Biggar 1901: 32.
7. Biggar 1901: 35.

8. Biggar 1901: chap. iv, esp. pp. 54-55.
9. Champlain 2: 146.
10. Jesuit Relations (Thwaites) 4: 207.
11. Innis 1927: 149.
12. Champlain 1: 123-24.
13. Shortt 1925: xxxv.
14. Champlain 2: 171.
15. Jesuit Relations 2: 127.
16. Jesuit Relations 5: 25.
17. Jesuit Relations 5: 97.
18. These have been brought together by Bailey (1937: 11-12, 49-55) and by Innis (1930: 13-16).
19. Cooper 1939: 82.
20. Biggar 1924: 49-53, 54-56.
21. Innis 1929: 286.
22. Jesuit Relations 12: 187-89.
23. Champlain 1: 296.
24. Denys 1908: 399, 440-41. Father Baird mentions extensive trade in 1616 (Jesuit Relations 3: 69, 77).
25. Denys 1908: 446.
26. Denys 1908: 444-46.
27. On early trade in this area see Bailey 1937: 26-27 and Innis 1930. On the hunting territory see Cooper 1939: 73-74 and Speck 1922: 86, 92.
28. Bonnycastle 1943: 74.
29. Bryce 1900: chaps. xiii and xxxvii; Innis 1930: 6, 41, 287, 328, 330, 393; Voorhis 1930: 1, 11, 12-13.
30. Jesuit Relations Vols. 7 and 32.
31. Large French rowboats (now motor boats). The fact that the Indians used them at so early a date is another indication of their dependence on trade goods.
32. Jesuit Relations 7: 97.
33. Jesuit Relations 7: 109.
34. Jesuit Relations 32: 271.
35. Speck and Eiseley 1939: 275 n.
36. Jesuit Relations 7: 171.
37. As maintained by Speck and Eiseley 1939: 274.

38. "Les Algonkins formerent donc plusieurs bandes, où ils incorporerent des Iroquois. Tous ces partis se divisèrent, afin de chasser plus facilement. Les Sauvages ont cette coutume, de s'approprier un terrain d'environ deux lieues en quarré, qu'ils batent sans que d'autres osent y aller chasser" (La Potherie 1753: 290).

39. La Potherie 1753: 132.

40. Innis 1930: 411.

41. Tyrrell 1931: 382.

42. Henry 1901: 23.

43. Jesuit Relations 8: 57, 59. Incidentally this statement has been cited by Jenness (1932: 125) as an important piece of evidence indicating the absence of the hunting territory in this period.

44. Speck and Esieley 1939: 270.

45. Cooper 1939: 82.

Notes to Chapter III

1. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 224-38.

2. Cabot 1920: 9; Grenfell 1909: 142; Low 1895: 40.

3. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 225-26.

4. Speck 1926a: 277-78.

5. Hind 1863, 1: 79-82, 196, 198-200, 239, 240, 247.

6. Strong 1929: 278.

7. Strong 1929: 286.

8. Lips 1947: 429.

9. Lips 1947: 399.

10. Strong Ms.

11. Tanner 1947, 2: 606-9.

Notes to Chapter IV

1. "[The Natashquan Indians] emportent avec eux quelques sacs de farine; le fusil leur procurera la viande. Le lièvre, la perdrix blanche, le caribou et l'ours, voilà les provisions sur lesquelles ils comptent pour passer l'hiver. Mais si le gibier est rare, s'il survient un accident au chasseur, la famine se déclarera dans la cabine . . . Il n'est pas rare que des familles entières ou presque entières disparaissent ainsi pendant l'hiver, lorsque la petite provision de farine a été épuisée et que la chasse ne produit rien" (Ferland 1858: 20, 21, 28).

2. Holme 1888: 190.

3. Stearns 1884: 179.

4. Speck 1935-36: 146.

5. Hunter 1907: 232-34.

6. Speck 1935-36: 155.
7. Speck and Eiseley 1942: 230.
8. Lips 1947: 432-33.
9. Lips 1947: 413.
10. Tanner 1947, 2: 634-35.
11. Lips 1947: 413.
12. McKenzie 1808: 408, 413; Lips 1947: 456, 457, etc. For an earlier period, Laure, *Jesuit Relations* Vol. 68. This statement is also borne out by the references to the depletion of game by the end of the century.
13. From the Mistassini reports. Quoted in Lips 1947: 463. (The misphrasing is in the original.)
14. Lips 1947: 454.
15. Lips 1947: 455.
16. McLean 1932: 262.
17. Lips 1947: 388.
18. Lips 1947: 458.
19. Lips 1947: 467. Also Misinnaigganish (p. 454), Nosipitan and Cowosowozit (p. 458), Nosipatan and Cowosowozit (p. 461), Weecheemaugan and Missinihagonish (p. 463), Caosawisit (p. 465), Cheeskathamutuk (pp. 465-66), and Potish (p. 469).
20. Lips 1947: 467. Also Noosipitan and Missinnahagonish (p. 463) and Canivapaiwisit (pp. 463-64).
21. Lips 1947: 466.
22. Lips 1947: 466.
23. Lips 1947: 454.
24. Lips 1947: 455. Also Nosepetan (p. 453), Esconish, Paishabnawescan, and Nistish (p. 453), Commatawet (p. 456), Shekaack, Wechemagan, and Neippeskeish (p. 457), Nosipitan (p. 458), Pimassom (p. 459), Weecheemaugan and Nautaway (p. 463), Canivapaiwisit (pp. 463-64), Caumattuet (p. 465), Cauochemassue (p. 466), Opisquatie (p. 467), Cheemooshoominabin (p. 468), and Nautam and Jabinoose (p. 469).
25. Lips 1947: 468.
26. Fleming 1940: 113, 126, 170, 229, 310, 353.
27. Lips 1947: 460.
28. Lips 1947: 469. Also Saiko (pp. 458, 464, 465).
29. Lips 1947: 431.
30. Lips 1947: 467.
31. Lips 1947: 460. Also Nosipitan (p. 458), Nautaway (p. 463), Caumattuet (p. 465), Cheeskathamutuk (pp. 465-66), Opisquatie (p. 467), and Wapatch (p. 468).

32. Hind 1863, 1: 224; 2: 120-21; Lips 1947: 388; Low 1895: 49, 86, 318; Tanner 1947, 1: 423.
33. Low 1885: 12, 18; 1895: 48, 50, 128, 319; 1896: 22. Also Cabot in Grenfell 1909: 190-91, 202.
34. Lips 1947: 388.
35. Lips 1947: 394.
36. Lips 1947: 451. One list gives as the winter supply for a couple with six children: 12 bags of flour, 12 pails of lard, 50 pounds of pork, 100 pounds of sugar, 10 pounds of rice and peas, 15 pounds of oatmeal, and 51 pounds of dried apples, plus beans, coffee, tea, baking powder, salt, and pepper. In comparison the list for 1864-65 (pp. 447-48) contains very little food.
37. Lips 1947: 391. See also comments of David 1906: 208; Rousseau 1945: 65-66, 87; 1949: 35-36; Speck 1915: 293; 1933: 591.
38. Lips 1947: 390.
39. Lips 1947: 429.
40. Caron 1916: 24.
41. Low, for instance, mentions the former intermarriage among the Indians around Hudson Bay (1895: 45, 70; 1885: 17).
42. Parkman 1907a: 258. Also Greenbie (1929: 83-88) gives an account of the coureurs de bois.
43. Strong Ms.

Notes to Chapter V

1. Jenness 1935: 5.
2. Jenness 1935: 11.
3. Jenness 1935: 4, 5, 7.
4. Steward 1941: 501.
5. Jenness 1937: 44.
6. Cooper 1939: 83-85; Speck 1926b: 325.
7. Jochelson 1926: 86.
8. From the description, Jochelson (1926: 116-18) seems to be using the term "clan" as we have been using the term "band."
9. Jochelson 1926: 118.
10. Jochelson 1926: 378-79.
11. See also Bogoras 1929: 594-95.
12. Jochelson 1926: 108.
13. Jochelson 1926: 108.
14. Jochelson 1926: 125.

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 No. 4.—*Penobscot Shamanism*. Speck.

After the completion of Volume 6 it was decided to issue future parts as separate Memoirs, assigning to them serial numbers and considering the twenty-eight papers comprised in the six volumes already published as Nos. 1-28. Memoirs issued subsequently are the following:

- No. 29.—*The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America*. Benedict. \$2.50 (Out of print.)
 No. 30.—*The Blood Sacrifice Complex*. Loeb. \$0.65. (Out of print.)
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